

flash BACK

Net surf down memory lane with '60s rockers BY KIMBERLY DREZDZON



SIMONE TIEBER ILLUSTRATION

The Net may be the medium of the new digital era, but it's also a place where the vinyl music of the 1960s is alive and rockin'.

Reach back in your memory for names such as Herman's Hermits, Gerry and the Pacemakers and Paul Revere and the Raiders. They're all there, but the king of today's '60s music interactives must be Peter Noone. He was, after all, "Henry the Eighth," he was, he was.

As lead singer of Herman's Hermits, Noone was really into "Something Good" in the '60s. And he still is.

Although no longer with the original Hermits, Noone, 51, who lives in Santa Barbara, Calif., will make more than 150 concert appearances this year in solo shows, with a backup band of Hermits, and a few Teen Idol Tour shows with Bobby Sherman and Mickey Dolenz.

Noone's Web site (www.peternoone.com) features pictures old and new, tour dates, a chance to order autographed CDs, a free E-mail newsletter and, most importantly, Noone himself.

Noone takes his trusty laptop everywhere and stays in touch with fans almost daily. He posts several notes each week in his forum, letting them know what he's up to or how a concert went or maybe just commenting on a world event. He personally answers his E-mail.

It's quite a change from the '60s, when all anyone could do was put his poster on a bedroom wall and mail off a fan letter.

"It used to be people would write to the record company and the record company would put it in a box, and who knows when you would get it?" he says. "It would sometimes be a year."

"Now they can E-mail me and it comes directly to me. I could be anywhere in the world and still get it. They know how to get in touch with me, and I answer them all."

Noone says he receives on average about 200 E-mail messages a day.

CHAT-O-RAMA

The site has been in operation for a little more than a year, starting out with about 50 visitors a day and building to the 1,500 a day it now averages, according to site programmer John Lytle.

One of the most popular aspects of the site is Club Noonatic, the chat room where fans from around the world gab at all hours.

Noone says chatting online with fans helps pass the time on tour.

"I'd rather go into my room on the road and interact than go into a bar and talk to strangers," he says. "On the site, it's a real family of people who interact with each other."

Many "Noonatics" make several trips a year to Noone's concerts, with get-togethers planned before or after.

"When it's the most fulfilling is when I go onstage like I did at Epcot [during a series of concerts at the end of April] and the first two or three rows are people who I know and are connected through the Internet site," Noone says.

Club Noonatic isn't restricted to baby boomers. You're just as likely to meet teenage fans who love

'60s music, such as Jilli, 13, and Jenny, 15, sisters who have even gone on to establish their own '60s Web sites (www.listenpeople.com and www.neverenough.com).

Coming soon to the Web site is a '60s memorabilia feature where anything from that decade can be sold or traded.

"We're going to try different bits, so that it doesn't get out of control," Noone says. "It has to be something that I can manipulate."

Also coming soon: another Web site based on Herman's Hermits (www.hermanhermits.com).

The British Invasion wasn't your cup of tea? Nothing was more American-made in the '60s than Paul Revere and the Raiders.

Visit former lead singer Mark Lindsay, 57, at his site (www.marklindsay.com) and relive the days when the Raiders went "Steppin' Out" and took fans many times to a "Good Thing."

The site, maintained by Deb Lindsay, Mark's wife of almost 10 years, features lots of information and old photos from the band's heyday, from a Raiders reunion a couple of years ago and of Mark in action on his solo career, which he continues today with about a hundred concert dates a year. There's a chance to buy autographed CDs and other merchandise, as well as subscribe to a newsletter.

And don't miss the section on "Where the Action Is," the TV show popular with teens from 1965 to 1967.

The site also provides an E-mail link to Lindsay. Deb transcribes all the E-mail, and Mark answers what he can.

"At least on an E-mail, nobody writes four-page missives," he says. "And the chances of me getting the message are pretty good — instead of back then, when a secretary just put it in a file or something."

One sack of mail even took about 33 years to

reach Lindsay; it was found last summer at the home of one of the Raiders' first agents.

"It was a bag of about 100 letters from 1965," he says. "It was amazing. Reading them, it was like going back in a time machine."

GROOVY, MAN

Back to swinging Liverpool at www.gerrymarsden.com, where you are serenaded by an instrumental version of Gerry and the Pacemakers' "Ferry Across the Mersey" on the home page. (Warning: You'll be singing it to yourself the rest of the day.)

The Web site was set up after Pacemakers lead singer Gerry Marsden learned how to put his new modem to use on a computer he had for a while.

"I did a search, purely out of curiosity, for 'Gerry and the Pacemakers,' and I found little and inaccurate information," says Marsden, 56. "As '60s music is still very popular worldwide, I thought I should have an official Web site."

There's an E-mail link on the site that goes directly to Marsden, who has just finished a tour of the United Kingdom and usually does about 40 concerts a year with a new group of Pacemakers.

"I get E-mails each week from fans telling me how my songs evoke memories from the '60s for them, and after visiting the site, they have dug out their old Gerry and the Pacemakers records and given them a play," he says.

"They say computers and the Internet is a young person's thing, but I'm amazed at the amount of people over 50 who have visited the site and surf the Net without the accompaniment of a minor," Marsden says.

So, go ahead: Surf back in time. We won't even ask how old you are. ♦

— Knight Ridder

more great '60s music Web sites

beatles.miningco.com: An entire page of Fab Four links

www.beegees.net: Still stayin' alive

members.aol.com/bocar/cj.htm: Chad and Jeremy

www2.excelr8.net/allowell/dcf.htm: The Dave Clark Five

www.cowsill.com: The rain, the park and many things

www.hooloovoo.com/mickey.html: Mickey Dolenz

members.aol.com/bocad/freddie.htm: Freddie and the Dreamers

cae.wisc.edu/gansler/hollies/hollies.htm: The bus stops here for the Hollies

www.tommyjames.com: Tommy James and the Shondells

www.davyjones.net: With many Monkees links

home2.swipnet.se/w-29168/bjklindex.htm: Billy J.

Kramer and the Dakotas

www.lovinsspoonful.com: Spoons old and new

www.rogermcguinn.com: Turn, turn, turn to this Byrds site

flexquarters.com/monkees.htm: Hey, hey, it's their official home page

www.motownat40.com: From the Supremes to the Temptations

www.peterandgordon.com: Another popular British Invasion duo

www.elvis-presley.com: Official site of Elvis and Graceland

www.puckettgap.com: Gary Puckett and the Union Gap

www.therollingstones.com: The Stones officially roll here

www.bobbysherman.com: Of "Shindig," "Here Come the Brides"

bobshannon.com: Links to artists from A to Z

www.sundazed.com: Hard to find CDs, links to other '60s sites

members.aol.com/bocad/zom.htm: The Zombies